



**Committee on  
Homeland Security Democrats  
Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member**

[www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/](http://www.house.gov/hsc/democrats/)

**For Immediate Release:**  
September 5, 2005

**Contact:** Jennifer Porter Gore  
Nadra Harrison  
202.226.2616

**Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Ranking Member, House  
Committee on Homeland Security,  
Calls for Entire State to Receive Disaster Relief**

*Mississippi Congressman Urges Expansion of the Disaster Declaration*

WASHINGTON, DC and JACKSON, MS—Mississippi Congressman Bennie Thompson, the lead Democrat on the House Committee on Homeland Security, has called for the disaster declaration covering Southern counties in the state to be expanded to include the entire state.

In a letter sent Friday to President Bush, Rep. Thompson noted that people fleeing the devastation of Hurricane Katrina are seeking shelter in the state's Northern counties. However, power outages, wind damage and diminishing gas supplies are crippling the entire state of Mississippi. Evacuees are found in all counties as Mississippians who are able to help have welcomed their neighbors from the Coast into their own homes and shelters. Schools and local authorities in these areas will be strained to accommodate the added numbers in their communities.

"We welcome our fellow Mississippians and are thankful we can open our homes and shelters to disaster victims."

Rep. Thompson also pointed that the disaster declaration was expanded last week to allow the entire states of Texas and Arkansas, which have cities offering victims large amounts of assistance, to receive disaster aid.

"I am very concerned, however, that only fifty-two counties are included in the disaster declaration for Mississippi, leaving nearly one-third of my home state off the emergency declaration," Rep. Thompson said. "This omission affects the ability of a number of counties in my congressional district to obtain disaster assistance."

Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour must also ask for the disaster area declaration to be expanded to the entire state. Congressman Thompson hopes Governor Barbour will join him soon in this urgent call.

-30-

A .pdf copy of the letter to President Bush is attached.